# The Fiscal Year 2004 Annual Report of the Office of Oral Health

Helping Maryland Smile

Family Health Administration
Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., Governor 

Michael S. Steele, Lt. Governor 

S. Anthony McCann, Secretary



| THE OFFICE OF ORAL HEALTH is charged with developing Statewide oral health preventive and educational strategies, conducting oral health surveys of the State's schoolchildren, facilitating the Oral Health Advisory Committee, and providing grant monies for the establishment of oral health programs targeted to populations at high-risk for oral disease. | t |
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## Caring

## **MISSION** The mission of the Office of Oral Health (OOH) is to improve the oral health status of Maryland residents through a variety of public oral health initiatives and interventions, characterized by a focus on health promotion and disease prevention. The

OOH develops Statewide cost-effective preventive and educational activities and policies that promote the role of oral health as being important to the overall health and quality of life of Marylanders. The OOH partners with other State agencies, local health departments, schools, community agencies, and private providers in developing policies, programs, and activities which address the following five major areas:

- Prevention: Develop and support scientifically proven oral health interventions and policies which prevent oral diseases, including promotion of community water fluoridation, use of dental sealants, systemic and topical fluoride use, tobacco use prevention, health education, instruction in oral hygiene, and proper dietary choices.
- Untreated Oral Disease: Improve the current status of untreated oral diseases in Maryland populations including early childhood caries, adult and child dental caries, and periodontal diseases.
- Oral Injuries: Reduce the number of oral injuries and sports-related oral injuries that occur in Maryland school children each year.
- Oral Cancer: Reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with oral cancer in Maryland residents.
- Special Populations: Improve access to oral healthcare treatment, preventive and educational services and resources to reduce oral health disparities in Maryland.



#### MARYLAND DENT-CARE LOAN ASSISTANCE REPAYMENT PROGRAM

#### **Background**

In 2000, the Maryland General Assembly created a loan repayment program for dentists titled the Maryland Dent-Care Loan Assistance Repayment Program (MDC-LARP). The purpose of the MDC-LARP is to increase the number of dentists providing oral health services to Medicaid recipients. Each year, five Maryland dentists are selected to participate in the program for a period of three years. The dentists selected to the program receive \$99,000 in educational loan repayment over the three-year period. In return for the loan repayment, dentists commit to provide at least 30 percent of their total patient services to the Medicaid recipient population per year.

The OOH, in partnership with the Maryland Higher Education Commission, administers this program. OOH monitors participants on a monthly basis to ensure compliance with program goals, reviews all applications, convenes the review panel, promotes the program, gathers feedback from award recipients, conducts initial and yearly site visits, and provides an orientation for new program participants.

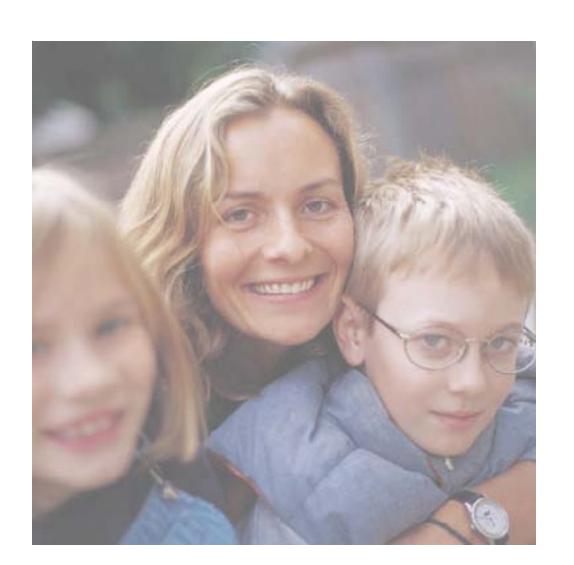
#### Accomplishments

- ◆ In Calendar Year 2003, a total of 15 dentists participated in the program, five of whom completed their obligation in December 2003. In January 2004, one new MDC-LARP dentist started the program and will continue through December 2006.
- Provided 16,423 Medicaid recipient appointments for oral health services in 2003.
- Used the following methods to promote the MDC-LARP:
  - Recruitment at the University of Maryland Baltimore College of Dental Surgery,
  - Articles in the Maryland State Dental Association newsletter,
  - Office of Oral Health Web site, and
  - Informational postcards distributed to local health department clinics and other interested individuals.

### DENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE AREAS (DENTAL HPSAS)

Dental Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) are federally designated areas that have shortages of dentists based on strict federal criteria. The primary intent of the Dental HPSA designation is to encourage the placement of dentists in areas that lack sufficient dental personnel. A Dental HPSA can be a distinct geographic area (such as a county), a specific population group within the area (such as the low income), or a specific public or nonprofit facility (such as a prison).

The Office of Oral Health partners with the Office of Primary Care and Rural Health in designating regions of the State that have a shortage of dental providers as Dental HPSAs. In Fiscal Year (FY) 04, the OOH evaluated Cecil and Frederick Counties to determine their eligibility for Dental HPSA designation. Unfortunately neither of these counties qualified as Dental HPSAs, but the information collected will be used to assist in the evaluation of other areas.



### MARYLAND ORAL CANCER PREVENTION AND EDUCATION INITIATIVE

The Maryland Oral Cancer Prevention and Education Initiative is a multifaceted program that establishes the following: 1) Educational programs to instruct healthcare providers on how to perform an oral cancer exam; 2) Oral cancer screening programs designed to detect oral cancer lesions early; and 3) Promotion of smoking cessation programs.

#### Background

Since 2001, the OOH has awarded grants to local health departments to develop programs based on the three programmatic goals listed above. In FY 04, 19 counties received two-year grants to reduce oral cancer mortality.

#### Oral Cancer Burden in Maryland

- Maryland ranks eighth in the nation for deaths from oral cancer.
- African American males in Maryland have the sixth highest death rate in the nation from oral cancer.

#### Reduce Oral Cancer Mortality Grants

- 1) Local health departments sponsored healthcare provider education trainings for 422 dentists, dental hygienists, physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants.
- 2) Approximately 4,000 adults were screened for oral cancer, 69 people had suspicious lesions, 33 people were referred to a surgeon for biopsy, and 3,946 were referred to smoking cessation programs.
- 3) Local health departments provided 15,128 adults and children with education about oral cancer and tobacco use and cessation.

#### Statewide Public Relations Campaign

- ◆ Oral Cancer Awareness Week
  - June 20 26, 2004 marked the fourth Maryland Oral Cancer Awareness Week proclaimed by Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
  - In celebration of Oral Cancer Awareness Week, the OOH sponsored a day-long seminar for local health department oral cancer coordinators focusing on local best practices and health literacy. More than 80 representatives from local health departments attended.

#### Oral and Oro-Pharyngeal Cancer Committee

- OOH served as the Oral and Oro-Pharyngeal Cancer Committee chair for the development of the Maryland Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan.
   The OOH participated on the Maryland Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan Core
- The OOH participated on the Maryland Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan Core Implementation Team.

#### **Outreach Activities**

Convention (lune).

- Developed and distributed The 6 Steps of a Good Exam for Oral Cancer wallet card which complements the Having an Oral Cancer Exam brochure that is designed for adults with low literacy levels.
- Created and distributed the How to Have a Healthy Mouth brochure for adults.
   This brochure provides 10 steps that adults can follow for good oral health.
  - Printed the *Having an Oral Cancer Exam* brochure in Spanish and reprinted the same brochure in English, and distributed both.
  - Oral cancer awareness, education, and intervention were provided at the following:
     Black History Month Health Fair (February); Students Against Starting Smoking
     (SASS) Conference (April); National Public Health Week Health Fair (April); the

University of Maryland Health Fair (April); and the Maryland State Firemen's

Healthy Smiles

#### PROMOTING ORAL HEALTH FOR CHILDREN

Oral health is an integral and significant component of overall health. The medical consequences of poor oral health include infection, pain, and impaired eating ability that can lead to poor nutritional status and poor overall health. In addition to these physical effects, poor oral health can lead to speech difficulties, unpleasant appearance affecting self-esteem, and an inability to concentrate due to pain. For children this pain negatively impacts their readiness to learn and be productive in school. Since dental disease occurs frequently and treatment is more expensive than prevention, educating parents and children has a health and economic benefit.

#### Child Oral Health Status in Maryland

- Survey of the Oral Health Status of Maryland School Children, 2000 2001\*
   results:
  - The weighted sample of 3,492 public school children represents 228,742 children in Maryland and included grades kindergarten, third, ninth and tenth.
    - 42 percent of all children (K, third, ninth, tenth grade) had untreated dental decay;
    - 53 percent of children in kindergarten and third grade had untreated decay in their primary teeth;
    - The Eastern Shore had the highest percentage of untreated dental decay (54 percent) followed by the Central Baltimore region (48 percent).

(\* The Survey of the Oral Health Status of Maryland School Children is repeated every five years.)

#### National Children's Dental Health Month (February)

and parents in locating sources for oral health services.

- First Maryland Children's Dental Health Month declared by Governor Ehrlich.
  - Developed a program planning packet for local health department oral health coordinators that included press releases, editorials, activities, and sample brochures.

#### Pediatric Dental Fellows Program

OOH provides funding to the University of Maryland Baltimore College of Dental Surgery for the Pediatric Dental Fellows Program. This program places trained dentists into the community to provide comprehensive oral health services to underserved children. In FY 2004, there were six dental fellows practicing in seven sites across the State, treating a total of 4,110 pediatric patients.

#### **Educational Materials**

As a method of increasing the oral health knowledge of Maryland residents, the OOH developed for distribution to local health departments, clinics, schools, and private citizens the *Maryland Oral Health Resource Guide 2003*. This resource guide provides information to aid school nurses, school health aides, teachers, school administrators, Head Start coordinators, day care providers, other health and administrative personnel,

#### **ORAL HEALTH GRANTS**

In FY 2004, oral health grants were awarded to 15 local health departments to develop community-based and school-based preventive, treatment, and educational and outreach programs for oral health.

#### **Clinical Services**

- Clinic Visits: 3,437 children and 930 adults received dental visits in FY 2004. Local health departments that provide comprehensive dental care are often one of the few providers of Medicaid dental services in their county and typically treat children. One county has instituted an adult dental program by working with private dentists in their county to reduce fees.
- Sealants: Approximately 3,000 children received pit-and-fissure sealants through school based sealant programs organized and implemented by local health departments. The majority of school sealant programs target second graders since the first permanent molars appear around the age of six.
- Fluoride Rinse/Tablets/Varnish: 11,354 children received fluoride rinse, tablets, or varnish in FY 2004. Local health departments partnered with schools and community programs to provide this service to school-aged children.

#### **Community Education**

More than 25,000 children received oral health education through local health departments in FY 2004. In addition, local health department dental staff educated WIC clients and staff, Head Start children, migrant communities and interacted with other local parent organizations to promote good oral health.

#### Case Management

In an effort to increase access to oral health services for Medicaid children, OOH provides funds for case management services. In FY 2004, approximately 2,600 children were case managed into dental care through OOH funded programs.

#### **OTHER ACTIVITIES**

In addition to providing funding for oral health programs at the local level, OOH works to foster partnerships and improve the dental public health infrastructure in Maryland.

#### **Partnerships**

The Office of Oral Health partners include the following State and local agencies and local coalitions whose efforts improve the oral health of Marylanders.

- Eastern Shore Oral Cancer Coalition This group is comprised of local health department programs, the Eastern Shore Oral Health Outreach Program and the Lower Eastern Shore Dental Education Program. The Coalition works to share resources and develop effective tools to increase oral cancer awareness on the Eastern Shore.
- Maryland Foundation of Dentistry for the Handicapped -- OOH provides funding to this group to coordinate the provision of free dental care to disabled and elderly Maryland residents who cannot afford needed dental treatment and are not eligible for public assistance.
- Mid-Atlantic P.A.N.D.A. (Prevent Abuse and Neglect through Dental Awareness) Coalition – OOH continues to serve as a founding member of the Mid-Atlantic P.A.N.D.A. Coalition along with the University of Maryland Baltimore College of Dental Surgery, Maryland State Dental Association, Maryland Dental Society, Maryland Dental Hygienist's Association, Children's National Medical Center, District of Columbia Dental Program, District of Columbia Dental Association and Delaware State Dental Program.

University of Maryland Baltimore College of Dental Surgery – OOH provides funding to the University of Maryland, Baltimore College of Dental Surgery to continue the Eastern Shore Oral Health Outreach Program and the Lower Eastern Shore Dental Education Program. These programs provide case management services, education, screening/sealants, and fluoride rinse for children on the

#### Dental Public Health Infrastructure

Fastern Shore.

The Office of Oral Health is involved in activities to expand the dental public health

infrastructure in Maryland for Medicaid recipients, the uninsured, and the underinsured.

Maryland. The final report will be available in FY 2005.

State Oral Health Collaborative Systems Grant – OOH applied for and received federal funding for the Evaluation of the Dental Public Health Infrastructure in Maryland. The Children's Dental Health Project will conduct this evaluation and provide recommendations for improving the dental public health infrastructure in

The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's 5 Year Plan for Oral Health - OOH, in collaboration with the Oral Health Advisory Committee,

- developed the 5 Year Plan for Oral Health. This plan outlines the current oral health issues facing Maryland and proposes strategies and potential partners to be included in addressing these issues.
- Oral Health Advisory Committee (OHAC) -- OOH facilitates the OHAC, which meets throughout the year to address oral health issues across the State. The OHAC is comprised of members from various organizations such as Maryland Medicaid, the University of Maryland Baltimore College of Dental Surgery, the Maryland State Dental Association, local health departments, and dental managed care organizations.

#### OFFICE OF ORAL HEALTH

## Family Health Administration Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

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